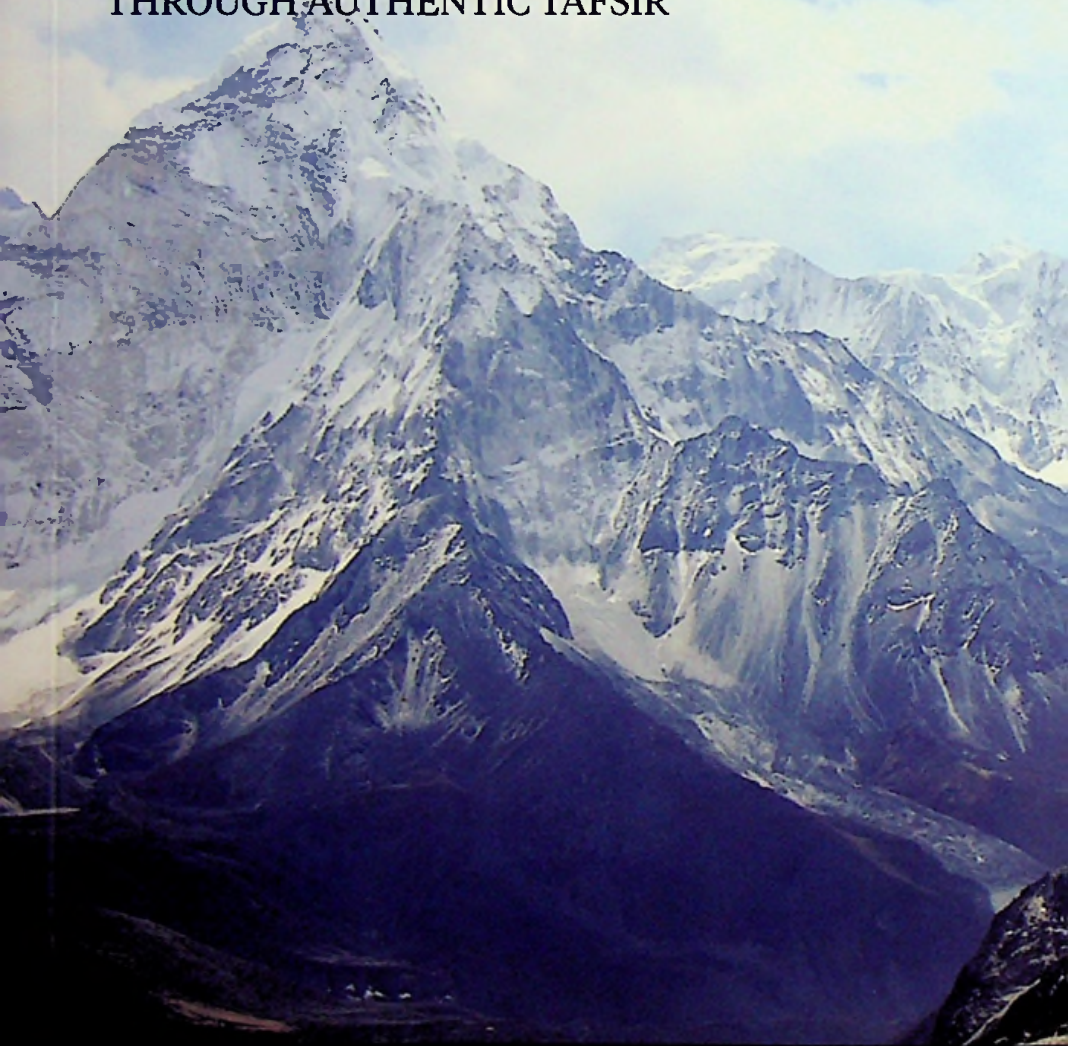


THE NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES OF ALLĀH

EXPLANATION OF THE CORRECT BELIEF
THROUGH AUTHENTIC TAFSĪR



TRANSLATED & COMPILED BY DR. ABDULLĀH LAHMĀMĪ

DOWNLOADED FROM SUNNICONNECT.COM

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:
“The seeking of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim.”

-Al-Tirmidhi

By downloading this book, you accept that you downloaded because you can't afford to buy it or ways to access it but want to gain the knowledge of Jannah. You also accept that you will support the publishers by purchasing their books whenever it is possible. We Collect & share books that are shared by different users on different platforms. May Allah the most high reward the ones who contribute books to common Muslims for the sake of Allah.

THE NAMES & ATTRIBUTES OF ALLĀH

EXPLANATION OF THE CORRECT BELIEF THROUGH
AUTHENTIC *TAFSĪR* ACCORDING TO

*Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī, Tafsīr al-Baghawī, Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr,
Tafsīr al-Sa'dī, Tafsīr by Shaykh Muḥammad Amin al-Shanqīṭī
and Tafsīr by Shaykh Al-'Uthaymīn (رحمهم الله)*

TRANSLATED AND COMPILED BY:

Dr. Abdulilāh Lahmāmi

COPYRIGHT © 2017/1438 | DR. ABDULILAH BIN RABAH LAHMAMI

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form, by any means, electronic, mechanical; photocopying, or otherwise without the express permission of the copyright owner.

EMAIL:

*a.lahmami@upm.edu.sa
info@markazmuaadh.com*

ONLINE:

*MarkazMuaadh.com
Twitter: @MarkazMuaadh*

CONTACT:

*Markaz Mu'aadh Bin Jabal Islamic Centre
19 Spackmans Way
Slough
United Kingdom
SL1 2SA*

Phone: 00441753533376

Printed by Mega Print in Turkey

ISBN: 9781999756925



Table of Contents

Preface.....	1
Arabic Transliteration System	2
Other Symbols	3
Introduction.....	4
The Names of Allāh – He is The First, The Last, The Highest and The Nearest .8	
The Attributes of Allāh: “Istawā” - Allāh rose above the Throne	12
The Meaning of Kursi (Footstool).....	20
The Kursi is the Footstool without resembling Allāh to creation	20
The Kursi is Different from the 'Arsh (Throne).....	22
The Kursi is not the Mulk (Dominion) or Sovereignty	25
The Kursi is not Knowledge.....	29
The Meaning of Kursi is Not just to Show Allāh's Greatness, Pride and Honour 30	
The Attribute of Allāh's 'Face'	32
The Attribute 'Hand'	39
The Attribute 'Eyes'	46
Appendix 1.....	51
Appendix 2 – The Stages of Repentance of Abū al-Hasan al-Ash'ari	52
The First Stage of Abū al-Hasan al-Ash'ari: The Way of the Mu'tazilites (Ta'til) Denying the Attributes of Allāh	52
The Second Stage of Abū al-Hasan al-Ash'ari: The Way of Ibn Kullāb	52
The Third Stage of Abū al-Hasan al-Ash'ari: The Way of the Scholars of Mainstream Sunnah	53
Bibliography.....	55

Preface

All praise is due to Allāh, I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh and that Muhammad (ﷺ) is His slave and last Messenger sent to mankind.

This compilation of translated works of the scholars shows the importance of adhering to the books of Sunni mainstream *tafsir* since they clarify the correct understanding from the Book of Allāh, the Prophetic Sunnah with the consensus of the companions.

I pray that this small effort is a proof for us and not against us on the Day of Judgement and a continuous charity. Inshā Allāh all proceeds from this book will go back to Markaz Mu'aadh b. Jabal in Slough, UK. Indeed actions are in accordance with one's intention and everyone will have what they intend.

Dr. Abdulilāh Lahmāmi
Madīnah An-Nabawīyyah
Saudi Arabia
6/6/1438 – 4th March 2017

Arabic Transliteration System

Throughout the present work, a modified version of the Library of Congress transliteration system has been consistently employed whenever an Arabic expression is quoted. The following table explains the Arabic transliteration system for Arabic consonants and vowels:

Arabic	Transliteration	Arabic	Transliteration
ا	a	ط	t
آ	ā	ظ	ẓ
ب	b	ع	ʿ
ت	t	غ	gh
ث	th	ف	f
ج	j	ق	q
ح	h	ك	k
خ	kh	ل	l
د	d	م	m
ذ	dh	ن	n
ر	r	هـ	h
ز	z	و	w
س	s	ي	y

3 | Authentic Tafsir

ش	sh		
ص	ṣ		
ض	ḍ		

Arabic	Transliteration	Arabic	Transliteration
ا	ā	ان	-an
و	ū	ون	-un
ي	ī	ين	-in
اء	a	واو	aw
ي	u	ي	ay
ي	i		

OTHER SYMBOLS

ﷺ May he be honoured and protected

ﷺ May Allāh be pleased with him

ﷺ May Allāh be pleased with them

ﷺ May Allāh have mercy on him

Introduction

This book outlines the Qur'ānic meaning of Allāh's Names and Attributes based upon the major canons of *tafsīr*. Mainstream *tafsīr* scholars who are from the Sunni background interpret the texts using principles clarified by Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) on how to understand the Qur'ān. They rely on the Prophetic narrations as well as narrations from the Prophet's Companions and their Successors. With regards to the verses concerning the belief in Allāh, the mainstream Sunni *tafsīr* compilations clarify the apparent meaning of the Names and Attributes of Allāh.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (2001:6/394) said, "Indeed the verses referring to the Attributes of Allāh in the Qur'ān were understood correctly by the Prophet's Companions in their explanation. **There was no differing amongst them...** I have gone through both large and concise books numbering more than one hundred books of *tafsīr*. However, I did not find, until now, that any of the Prophet's Companions had given their own opinion (by changing their apparent meaning) about the verses or Prophetic traditions regarding Allāh's Attributes other than what is understood and apparent."

Imam Ibnul Qayyim (رحمته الله) said, "**The Companions did not differ with regard understanding the verses on the Attributes of Allāh** in one place, rather their statements are in agreement. Likewise, the statements of the successors after them are in agreement to them, that is in affirming the Attributes of Allāh and leaving them as they are (not questioning and rejecting them) whilst at the same time understanding their meaning and affirming their realities (*haqīqatihā*)."

[AL-SAWĀ'IQ AL-MURSALA: 210]

Shaykh ‘Abdulaziz Bin Baz (رحمته الله) said, “As for *ta’wil* (distortion) of Allāh’s attributes away from their apparent meaning then that is the way of the innovators.” [MAJMU’ AL-FATĀWA (4:133)]

Among the most famous scholars of mainstream *tafsir* are Imam al-Tabarī (d.AH310), Imam al-Baghawī (d.AH516), Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.AH728), Imam Ibn Kathīr (d.AH774), Shaykh Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān (d.AH1307/1890), Shaykh al-Sa’dī (d.AH1376) and more recently Shaykh al-Shanqītī (d.AH1393) and Shaykh al-‘Uthaymīn (d.AH1422). These *tafsir* compilations assert the apparent Names and Attributes of Allāh such as Face, Hands, Eyes and Rising above the Throne without likening Allāh to creation.

Examples of other *tafsir* compilations quoted by translators of the Qur’ān that have followed the principles of *tafsir* by way of narrations but did not always assert the apparent meaning of the Attributes of Allāh; are those such as al-Qurtubī’s (d.AH671) *tafsir* and al-Suyūṭī’s (d.AH911) *tafsir*. Both al-Qurtubī and al-Suyūṭī were influenced by the Ash‘arite¹ sect in understanding the Names and Attributes of Allāh. Al-Qurtubī did not assert the apparent meaning of the Attributes of Allāh in his *tafsir* except *Istawā* (Allāh

¹ The Ash‘arite sect asserted the Names of Allāh but only seven of the Attributes of Allāh which were acceptable to the intellect (Knowledge, Power, Will, Life, Hearing, Sight and Speech). It branched off from the Mu‘tazilite sect and the ascription is to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī (d.AH324) who was a Mu‘tazilite for forty years. Thereafter, he refuted them and followed his new teacher Ibn Kullāb but his teacher did not assert the apparent meaning of the Attributes of Allāh except a few. Later, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī left the teachings of Ibn Kullāb and followed the path of mainstream Sunni belief in asserting the apparent meaning of the Names and Attributes of Allāh. He wrote three books before he passed away proving his retraction, *Maqālat al-Islamiyyīn*, *al-Risālah ila Ahl al-Thagr* and *Al-Ibānah*. However, many followers of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī did not abandon the teachings of Ibn Kullāb until today. Al-Fawzan S. (2003/46-48) *A Glimpse At The Deviated Sects*.

rising above the Throne) and other Attributes of Allāh such as 'Knowledge', 'Will', 'Hearing' and 'Seeing'. Al-Suyūṭī, likewise, did not assert the apparent meaning of Allāh's Names and Attributes.

Some translators of the Qur'ān, with regards to many Attributes of Allāh, would refer to other Ash'arite or Mu'tazilite² scholars such as al-Bāqillānī (d.AH403), al-Juwaynī (d.AH478), Zamakhsharī (d.AH538), al-Bayḍāwī (d.AH685), al-Rāzī (d.AH925), Muḥammad 'Abduh (d.1905), Sayyid Quṭb (d.1966) and others. This led them to stray and err in not asserting the apparent meaning of these Attributes because if they had, they believed that this would be likening Allāh to creation. Therefore, secondary, allegorical meanings of Allāh's Attributes were used in these translations that were not in line with mainstream *tafsīr*.

Other misguided non-mainstream *tafsīr* scholars from the Shi'ite sect include al-Qummī (d.AH307) and al-'Ayyāshī (d.AH320). These books of *tafsīr* mainly relied on the interpretations from either the Ash'arite or the Jahmite³ and Mu'tazilite sects regarding the belief in Allāh.

² "The Mu'tazilite sect appeared between the years AH105 and AH110 from their founder Wāṣil b. 'Aṭa al-Ghazzal. The sect stemmed from the Jahmite sect since the Jahmites negated the Names and Attributes of Allāh while the Mu'tazilites only asserted the Names of Allāh but negated the Attributes of Allāh. Wāṣil b. 'Aṭa disagreed with the famous scholar of his time, Ḥasan Al-Basrī (d.AH110)." ('AWAJI 2005/1163-1166) *Firaq Mu'āṣirah Tantasib ila al-Islām*. And (AL-FAWZAN 2003/44,45) *A Glimpse At The Deviated Sects*.

³ "The Jahmites are named after their founder Jahm b. Safwān who did not assert the Names and Attributes of Allāh [but rather other metaphorical meanings were used for them]. They claim that Allāh is an Essence devoid of names and attributes." (AL-FAWZAN 2003:41).

Al-Rāzī's *tafsīr* follows the Ash'arite creed while at the same time borrowing from the philosophers and Mu'tazilites. The Brelvī⁴ (Sufi) and the Qādyānī⁵ translations of the Qur'ān likewise erred when they did not affirm the apparent meaning of Allāh's Attributes.

⁴ The Brelvī sect of Aḥmad Raza Khān al-Brelvī, stemmed from the Indian sub-continent in the nineteenth and twentieth century. They over exaggerated their love for the Prophet (ﷺ). They claim he is not human. They were heavily influenced by Sufism, Shi'ism and Hinduism. Some of their other ideas include: seeking help from other than Allāh (polytheism), claiming others beside Allāh know the unseen, grave worship, saint worship, seeking blessings from figures, images and talismans, spreading superstitious fairy-tales and distorting the meaning of Qur'anic verses. (EHSAN ELAHI ZAHIR 2011) *The Reality of Barellawi'ism* edited and adapted from the original work.

⁵ "The Qādyānī sect is one of the Bāṭinī sects (that use their own opinion to interpret the Qur'ān) that claim there are hidden meanings to various legislated texts that only their founder knows. It appeared at the end of the nineteenth century in India, where they call themselves Qādyānis and in Africa they became known as Aḥmadīs. Their founder Ghulām Aḥmad is from Qādyān in India. He claimed to be a Prophet. ('AWAJI 2005/744) *Flraq Mu'āṣirah Tantaṣīb ilā al-Islām*.

The Names of Allāh – He is The First, The Last, The Highest and The Nearest

The following verse contains all four names discussed:

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ ۚ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

“He is the First (nothing is before Him) and the Last (nothing is after Him), the Most High (nothing is above Him) and the Most Near (nothing is nearer than Him). And He is the All-Knower of everything.”⁶

Regarding the exact Names mentioned in the verse above, the Prophet (ﷺ) explained their meaning when he said:

أَنْتَ الْأَوَّلُ لَيْسَ قَبْلَكَ شَيْءٌ وَأَنْتَ الْآخِرُ لَيْسَ بَعْدَكَ شَيْءٌ وَأَنْتَ الظَّاهِرُ لَيْسَ فَوْقَكَ شَيْءٌ وَأَنْتَ الْبَاطِنُ لَيْسَ دُونَكَ شَيْءٌ أَفْضَى عَنَّا الدِّينَ وَأَغْنَيْنَا مِنَ الْفَقْرِ

“You are the First and there is no one before You and You are the Last no one after you and you are the *Zāhir* – Highest and there is no one above You and You are the *Bāṭin* - Nearest and there is no one nearer than You (by His knowledge)...”⁷

Therefore, the context of what is meant by *Zāhir* is that Allāh is the ‘Highest’ and the meaning of *Bāṭin* is that Allāh is the ‘Nearest.’ Some literal translations of the opening verses of Sūrat al-*Ḥadīd* express that it means Allāh is ‘apparent,’ the ‘secret,’ ‘the hidden’ or ‘the inner’. The latter translations are literal translations without looking at the context of mainstream *tafsīr* such as the Prophetic traditions.

Imam Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qirwānī (d.AH386), a Malikī scholar from the fourth century, explaining these Names, said, “There is no beginning to Him being the First and no end to Him being the Last.

⁶ Sūrah Al-Ḥadid: 3

⁷ *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* (2008) no.8960, 9247.

He is above the Glorified 'Arsh with His Essence, and He is everywhere by His knowledge." ('ABBAD A. 2002:74)

The scholar of mainstream *tafsir*, Imam al-Ṭabarī (2001:22/385) said that, "*Zāhir* means that He is above all, that is other than Himself, He is the Highest above everything, there is nothing above Him... *Bāṭin* means there is not anyone closer to anything other than Allāh as he said,

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

"And We are nearer to him than his jugular vein (by our knowledge)."⁸

The scholar of mainstream *tafsir*, Imam al-Baghawī (2002:4/321) said, "He is the First before everything, He was present and nothing else was present. He is 'the Last' means, He will be present after the destruction of everything. He is 'the Highest' means that He is the Victor, **the Highest over everything**. He is 'the Nearest' means that He is the All-Knowing who knows everything. This is the meaning of the statement of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه)." Here, the mainstream *tafsir* scholar Imam al-Baghawī defines the apparent meaning of the attribute *Zāhir* to mean Highest over everything. This is similar to Imam al-Ṭabarī's definition.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah in his *tafsir*⁹ (AH1432:6/201,202) of this third verse in Sūrah Al-Hadīd, mentioned the *ḥadīth* above to explain the verse and added, "More than one of the scholars of the righteous Predecessors believed that He descends to the lowest heavens and yet He is still above the 'Arsh, so He never is under the creation or inside it at all. Rather, His rising above creation is an Attribute asserted for Him. Allāh, the Lord, is always above His

⁸ Sūrah Qāf: 16

⁹ This was compiled from Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah's books by Iyyād b. Abdullatif b. Ibrāhīm al-Qaysī (AH1432).

creation. When the Prophet (ﷺ) said that, 'في السماء' (*fis-samā'*) meaning 'ascension' or 'Highness', it did not mean that He is inside the stars and planets but rather, He is above the heavens. If He is above the 'Arsh', then He is the Highest, the Most High. He is not in a direction of a created place, there is not any presence except for the created and the Creator. The Creator is separate from His creation and is above it. "

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Imam Ibn Kathīr, in his *tafsīr* (1999:1078), mentioned the *ḥadīth*, "You are the First and there is no one before You and You are the Last and there is no one after You and You are the *Zāhir* – Highest and there is no one above You and You are the *Bāṭin*, Nearest and there is no one nearer than You (by His Knowledge)." ¹⁰

To explain the verse:

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

"He is the First (nothing is before Him) and the Last (nothing is after Him), the Most High (nothing is above Him) and the Most Near (nothing is nearer than Him). And He is the All-Knower of everything." ¹¹

Imam Ibn al-Qayyim (1993:383), likewise, mentioned the previous *ḥadīth* above to explain the same verse in al-*Ḥadīd*. He asserted that *Zāhir* means that Allāh is the Highest and no one is above Him.

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Shaykh Ṣiddiq Ḥasan Khān (1965:9/285) comments on the verse above: "He (Allāh) is before everything without a beginning or before all of the things that are present in the sense that He is the One that brought everything else

¹⁰ *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* (2008) no.8960, 9247.

¹¹ *Sūrah Al-Ḥadīd*: 3

to exist. He is the Last after everything without an end. He is always present after everything else ends. He is the *Zāhir* meaning the One who is Higher than everything and the presence of His existence is known with clear proof. He is the *Bāṭin* meaning He knows everything that is hidden (in the language)."

The mainstream scholar of *tafsir*, Shaykh al-Sa'di (2002:837) commenting on the verse in al-Ḥadīd:3 said: "You are 'the First' and there is no one before You and You are 'the Last' and there is no one after You. You are the *Zāhir* - 'Highest' no one is above You and You are the *Bāṭin* - 'Nearest' and there is no one nearer than Allāh (by His knowledge) to you."

The scholar of *tafsir*, Shaykh al-'Uthaymīn (2004:361,362) said in his *tafsir* of the verse above, "He is 'the First' - means no one is before Him, there is no one with Him nor was there anyone before Him. He is 'the Last' - means there is no one after Him because if there existed after Him something then it would not be from the creation of Allāh. Rather, all of the creation is the creation of Allāh. He is 'the First' who has no beginning, He is 'the Last' without an end nor anything after Him. He is 'the Highest', as the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "without anything above him." All of the creation is below Him. There is no one above Him and He is 'the nearest' as the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "There is no one nearer to something than Him," meaning there is not anything closer to something than Allāh, for He is all aware of all things." Also Shaykh al-'Uthaymīn (2009:1068) stated that, "All of the creation is below Him, the Most High, since there isn't anything above Him and *Bāṭin* means nothing comes between Him and His knowledge since He is All-Aware knowing everything, no mountains, no trees, no walls nor other that these (can come between Allāh and His Knowledge of affairs)."

The Attributes of Allāh: “*Istawā*” - Allāh rose above the Throne

Even though the attribute *istawā* - rising above, could have many different meanings in the language, mainstream *tafsīr* scholars are in agreement that when addressing Allāh, *istawā* is restricted in the explanation given by other verses and Prophetic traditions.

Allāh’s *istawā* – rising above the Throne has been mentioned in seven places in the Qur’ān; Sūrah al-A’rāf: 54, Yūnus: 3, al-Ra’d: 2, al-Furqān: 54, Taha: 5, al-Sajda: 4, Al-Hadīd: 4. For example,

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى

“The Most Beneficent (Allāh) ***istawā*** (rose over) the (Mighty) Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty).”¹²

The translation above by Khān and al-Hilālī is in the context of other verses in the Qur’ān which clearly show that Allāh rose or ascended above the ‘*Arsh* (Throne) in a way that befits His Majesty:

تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ

“The angels and the Rūh [Jibrael] **ascend** to Him.”¹³

إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ

“To Him **ascend** (all) the goodly words.”¹⁴

بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ

“But Allāh raised him [‘*Īsā*] **up** unto Himself.”¹⁵

¹² Sūrah Tā-Hā: 5

¹³ Sūrah Al-Ma’ārij: 4

¹⁴ Sūrah Fāṭir: 10

¹⁵ Sūrah An-Nisā’: 158

وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

“And He is the Most High, the Most Great.”¹⁶

The translated meaning of *istawā* to mean ‘above’ is also in accordance with other verses such as:

يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ

“They fear their Lord above them.”¹⁷

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ

“And He is the Irresistible, above His slaves.”¹⁸

There are also many Prophetic traditions showing that Allāh is above such as, **“When Allāh created the creation, He wrote in His Book that is with Him above the Throne ‘Verily My Mercy has overcome My Anger.’”**¹⁹ The apparent meaning of *istawā* preceded by عَلَى - ‘Alā as in the original verse,

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى

“The Most Beneficent (Allāh) *istawā* (rose over) the (Mighty) Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty).”²⁰

by consensus of the Arabic linguists means ‘ارتفع’ - ‘to ascend over’ or ‘to rise above’ Also, the Successor, Abū al-‘Āliyah (d.AH110) said: “*Istawā* means ‘to ascend’ or ‘to rise’ (‘ارتفع’)”²¹. Mujāhid (d.AH103),

¹⁶ Sūrah Al-Baqarah: 255

¹⁷ Sūrah An-Nahl: 50

¹⁸ Sūrah Al-An‘ām: 18

¹⁹ Ibn al-Qayyim said in his book *Ijtīmā’ Juyūsh al-Islamiyyah* p.107, regarding this *ḥadīth* “reported by al-Khallal in *Kitāb al-Sunnah* with an authentic chain similar to al-Bukhārī” (CITED AL-SAQAF ‘ALAWI 1994:52) in *Sifāt Allāh*.

²⁰ Sūrah Tā-Hā: 5

²¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (1993), Book on *Tawḥīd* no.7317.

the student of the Prophet's Companion, Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said, "*istawā* means '**to be above**' ('*Alā*)"²².

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Imam al-Tabarī (AH1374,11/288), commenting on the following verse:

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ

"And He is the Irresistible (Supreme) above His slaves and He is the All-Wise, Well-Acquainted with all things."²³

"This means that Allāh is **high above** His servants because Allāh described Himself by being above them."

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Imam al-Baghawī, in his *tafsīr* (2002:3/133), clarified the mainstream Sunni position, regarding the same verse above by saying, that **Allāh is above** His slaves. This is an Attribute of ascension which Allāh solely specified for Himself.

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Imam Ibn Kathīr, in his *tafsīr* (1999:667) regarding the fifth verse in Sūrah Tā-Hā said, "The safest path is the path of the Successors, that is, to accept the apparent meaning of these attributes as they have come in the Book and the Sunnah without asking how, without distortion, without likening them to creation, without denying them and without resembling them." Regarding verse 54 in Sūrah al-A'rāf,

ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ

"And then He Istawa (rose over) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty)."

Imam Ibn Kathīr, in his *tafsīr* (1999:384) added, "We follow, regarding this, the path of the righteous Predecessors such as

²² Ibid.

²³ Sūrah Al-An'ām: 18

Mālik, al-Awzā'ī, 'al-Thawrī, al-Laith b. Sa'd, al-Shāf'ī, Aḥmed, Ishāq b. Rahwayh and other than them from the Muslim scholars, past and present; that is to accept the apparent meaning of these attributes as they have come without asking how, without likening them to creation and without denying them. As for likening Him to creation, as in the minds of those that resemble Allāh to creation then this is rejected since nothing is similar to Him from His creation..."

The mainstream *tafsīr* scholar, Shaykh al-'Uthaymīn (2006b:207) said, "*Istawā 'alā 'Arsh* means 'to rise above' or 'ascend' in a manner that befits His Majesty and not in any manner similar to creation." Imam Ibn al-Qayyim, after mentioning four possible meanings of *istawā*, concluded that, "What is apparent is that *istawā* and its reality refers to rising above and ascension just as all of the scholars of the language and scholars of (accepted) *tafsīr*, have mentioned" (MUḤAMMAD B. AL MUWṢALĪ 2004:933)

Even *istawā* with the preposition '*ilā*' after it as in استوى إلى has been mentioned by Ibn Qayyim to mean *al-'Ulūw* (ascension) and *irtifa'* (rising above) by consensus of the righteous Predecessors. (MUḤAMMAD B. AL-MAWṢALĪ 2004:889)

The scholar of *ḥadīth* Ishāq b. Rahwayh (d.AH238) said regarding the following verse:

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى

"The scholars have consensus that Allāh **rose above** the '*Arsh* and He Knows everything in the lowest of the seven earths."^{24/25}

²⁴ Cited in al-Dhahabī (2003:2/1128).

²⁵ Sūrah Tā-Hā: 5

Imām Mālik b. Anas from the second century (d.AH179) was asked about the same verse:

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى

“The Most Beneficent (Allāh) *istawā* (rose over) the (Mighty) Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty).”²⁶

Imām Mālik b. Anas was asked, “How has He ascended?” After Imām Malik asserted the apparent meaning of the Attribute *istawā* without explaining how it was, he replied, “How (*kayf*) cannot be comprehended by the intellect, and *al-istiwā*’ (ascent) is known. One having faith in it is obligatory and questioning it is an innovation.”²⁷

Also the Mālikī scholar of Qayrawān (an area in Tunisia), Imam Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī from the fourth century (d.AH386) in his *Muqadimat al-Qayrawāniyyah*²⁸ stated,

لَا يَبْلُغُ كُنْهَ صِفَتِهِ الْوَاصِفُونَ، وَلَا يُحِيطُ بِأَمْرِهِ الْمُتَفَكِّرُونَ، يَعْتَرِ الْمُتَفَكِّرُونَ بِآيَاتِهِ، وَلَا يَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي مَاهِيَةِ ذَاتِهِ، وَأَنَّهُ فَوْقَ عَرْشِهِ الْمَجِيدِ بَذَاتِهِ، وَهُوَ فِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ يَعْلَمُهُ.

“None is able to describe the true nature of His Attributes. His affair cannot be encompassed and comprehended by the thinkers...He is above the Glorified ‘*Arsh* with His Essence. He is everywhere by His Knowledge.”

Here, like Imām Mālik, Imam Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī asserted that *istawā* means ‘above the ‘*Arsh*’ and further clarified that it is His Essence that is above the Throne as opposed to the Ash’arite

²⁶ Sūrah Tā-Hā: 5

²⁷ Related in al-Bayhaqī in *al-Asma’ was-Sifāt* (1993:408) by way of ‘Abdullāh b. Wahb from Mālik. Ibn Hajar said in *Fath al-Bārī* (13/406-407) that its isnād (chain of narrators) is (good). It was authenticated by al-Dhahabi in *al-‘Ulūw* (1420: 103).

²⁸ Cited in ‘Abbad A. (2002:44,45) Qaṭf al-Janal Dānī Sharḥ Muqaddimat al-Risālat Ibn Abi Zayd al-Qayrawānī.

who do not accept this. Rather, they only accept that Allāh is above in terms of His Rank and Status but not in terms of His Essence.

The great Māliki scholar, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (1979:7/145) remarked that the righteous Predecessors had agreed upon asserting the apparent meaning of the Attributes of Allāh which are related in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, having faith in them and understanding them in their **real sense and not metaphorically**. (SEE APPENDIX 1)

Likewise, Abū 'Umar al-Talamankī, a Malikī scholar said, "The scholars of the Sunnah have unanimously agreed that **Allāh is above His Throne in the real sense and not in the metaphorical sense.**" ('UTHMĀN 2009:183) This clearly shows that the translators who translated *istawā* (as being) only 'authority' have not followed the mainstream Sunni scholars of *tafsīr*. Instead, they have chosen a metaphorical meaning just as the Mu'tazilite, Ash'arite and Jahmite jurists have done in the past.

As for *istawā 'alā 'Arsh* to mean 'firmly established' (*istaqarra*) on the throne, as some of the righteous Predecessors mentioned and some translators asserted, then some of the mainstream Sunni scholars have negated it due to a possibility of having a negative connotation that Allāh has a need for the throne. Shaykh Al-Albānī (1991:40) mentioned in *Mukhtaṣar al-'Ulūw* that there is no proof from the Qur'ān and Sunnah to mention that *istawā* means *istaqarra* (established).

Al-Dārimī said in *Ar-Radd 'alā al-Jahmiyyah* (p.18), "We describe Allāh with that which He described Himself with and with that which the Messenger (ﷺ) described Him with." This, no doubt, is without likening Allāh to the creation.

Where Allāh is – is a point of belief which was taught by the Messenger (ﷺ). For example, even a servant of the Companion Mu'āwiyah b. Ḥakam Al-Sulamī knew where Allāh is

when the servant was asked. The Companion of the Prophet, Mu'āwiyah b. Ḥakam Al-Sulamī said,

"I said, Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). I was till recently a pagan, but Allāh has brought Islam to us. I had a maid-servant who tended goats by the side of Mount Uhud and the area of Jawwaniya. One day, I happened to pass that way and found that a wolf had taken a goat from her flock. I am after all a man from the children of Adam. I felt upset as they (human beings) feel upset, so I slapped her. I came to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and felt (this act of mine) was something grievous. I said, "Messenger of Allāh, should I not grant her freedom?" He (the Prophet) said, "Bring her to me." So I brought her to him. He said to her, "Where is Allāh? She said, "He is above the Heaven (*fī samā*)."²⁹ He said, "Who am I?" She said, "You are the Messenger of Allāh." He said, "Grant her freedom as she is a believing woman."²⁹

This narration shows that Allāh is above the Heavens. The answer '*fī samā*' does not literally mean 'in the sky' as in the verse:

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ

"Say: travel through (over) the land and observe how He began creation."³⁰

Here *فِي الْأَرْضِ* does not mean travel 'in the land' but rather 'above/over the land.' Similarly, '*fī samā*' does not mean 'in the sky' but rather 'above/over the sky.'

The scholar of mainstream *tafsir*, Imam al-Ṭabarī said in the explanation of the *ḥadīth*, "Know, may Allāh protect us and you with His Mercy such that we are protected from deviation, that Allāh, the glorified is above the sky (*fī samā*) above everything,

²⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (2005:33/537) no.1199, Book of Prohibition of speaking in the prayer.

³⁰ *Sūrah Ankabūt*: 20

ascended over His Throne meaning that He has risen above it and the meaning of *istawā* is 'ascension'.³¹ This explanation of Imam al-Tabarī is similar to what the Successors mentioned.

³¹ Imam al-Tabarī in Ta'wil Ahādīth Al-Mushkilah (INTRODUCTION/A-24) cited in Ṣadiq (2007:14) in Takhīl al-'Aynayn bi Jawāz Su'āl 'an Allāh bi 'Ayn.

The Meaning of Kursī (Footstool)

وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ

“His *Kursī* extends over the heavens and the earth.”³²

The reason why this verse was chosen, is because one of the Attributes of Allāh is mentioned in its explanation. Likewise, this verse has been under much contention between mainstream and non-mainstream scholars of *tafsīr*. This has resulted in many different views regarding its translation. There seems to be five different meanings that are mentioned in the different books of *tafsīr*, both mainstream and non-mainstream. Some said that the *Kursī* is ‘the Throne’ while others mentioned that the *Kursī* is the ‘Knowledge of Allāh’. It is also said that the *Kursī* is ‘the Footstool of Allāh’ without likening Allāh to creation. It is a separate creation to the ‘*Arsh (the Throne)*’ and is smaller. Some mentioned that the *Kursī* is ‘the sovereignty of Allāh’ while others said it refers to His Pride and Honour. I will discuss all five meanings with their *tafsīr* and which one was in accordance with the mainstream *tafsīr*.

THE KURSĪ IS THE FOOTSTOOL WITHOUT RESEMBLING ALLĀH TO CREATION

The position of the righteous Predecessors from the Prophet’s Companions and the Successors and those that follow their path affirmed that the *Kursī* refers to *Footstool*. This is what is based upon the Qur’ān, Sunnah and the language of the Arabs. This is from the *ḥadīth* of Abū Dhar and statements of many of the Prophet’s Companions such as Ibn ‘Abbās and Ibn Mas’ūd, Abū Mūsā Al-Ash’arī, Mujāhid (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) and others. Many scholars have said there is a consensus of the righteous Predecessors about this.

³² Sūrah Al-Baqarah: 255

Concerning the verse:

وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ

“His Kursī extends over the heavens and the earth,”

Muḥammad b. Abdullāh b. Zamanayn (2010:109), the Māliki scholar from the fourth century (d.AH399), said in *Uṣūl al-Sunnah*, “Among the statements of the scholars of Sunnah is that the *Kursī* is in front of the Throne, the place of the two feet (*bilā-kayf* – without knowing how these Attributes are, nor likening Allāh to His creation).”

Al-Qurtubī, M. (AH1423:3/266) said in his *tafsīr* regarding the above verse, “What the Prophetic narrations necessitate is that the *Kursī* is a great creation in front of the Throne and the Throne is greater than it.”

The fourth century scholar (d.AH324) Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash’arī³³ mentioned in (2007:200) *al-Risāla ilā Ahl al-Thagr*, that there is consensus that Allāh has a *Kursī* which is other than the ‘Arsh. Muḥammad b. Abdullāh b. Zamanayn al-Māliki (2010: 34,96-105) said that this is the statement of the Sunni scholars.

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Imam Ibn Kathīr in his *tafsīr* (1999:146) quotes the Prophet’s Companion, Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه), as saying, “The *Kursī* is the footstool, and no one can comprehend how vast the Throne is except Allāh.”³⁴

³³ See Appendix 2 regarding the stages of repentance of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash’arī.

³⁴ It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albānī (1991:102) in *Mukhtaṣar al-‘Ulūw* of Dhahabī. Beirut, Al-Maktab al-Islamī. The *ḥadīth* scholar al-Haythamī (d.AH807/1404) cited in Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah’s *Majmū’* (2001:6/323) that all the narrators are narrators of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (referring to its authenticity).

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (2001:6/584) said, “The *Kursi* is confirmed in the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah and consensus of the righteous Predecessors.”

Ibn Abī al-‘Izz Al-Ḥanafī (d.AH792), the judge of Damascus in his time, in (AH1400:313) *Sharḥ ‘Aqidah al-Tahawiyah*, said that the *Kursi* is in front of the Throne.

THE KURSĪ IS DIFFERENT FROM THE ‘ARSH (THRONE)

The *Kursi* has been specifically mentioned and distinguished from the Throne as a separate creation in the following text: The Prophet’s Companion, Abū Dhar (رضي الله عنه) said, I heard the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) say, “The *Kursi* in relation to the Throne is like an iron ring thrown out upon an open space of desert.”³⁵

It was narrated that the Prophet’s Companion Ibn Mas’ūd (رضي الله عنه) said, “Between the first heaven and the one above is (a distance of) five hundred years. Between each of the heavens is (a distance of)

³⁵ Shaykh al-Albānī (1972:1/175,176) in *al-Saḥīḥah* no.109 said: “There are many different narrations of this *ḥadīth* (that are not authentic) but what seems to be most authentic is the narration of Ibn Zayd from his father from the Companion Abū Dhar (رضي الله عنه). It is quoted by Imam Ibn Jarir al-Ṭabarī in his *Tafsīr* collection (5/399) Imam al-Ṭabarī narrated it by way of Yūnus, Ibn Wahb from Ibn Zayd. All of the narrators are trustworthy and even though there seems to be a disconnection just before the Companion Abū Dhar (رضي الله عنه), taking into account all the (supporting) narrations, the *ḥadīth* is authentic. The best chain is the last one (we mentioned). The *ḥadīth* is clear that the greatest of creation after the ‘*Arsh* is the *Kursi* and without the need to be carried nor is it something imaginary. That it is a clear rebuttal of those who say that the *Kursi* means Dominion or Authority as is found in some books of *Tafsīr*. As for those who quoted Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) as saying that it refers to ‘Knowledge’ then this is not authentic.” [MY TRANSLATION AND SUMMARY].

five hundred years. Between the seventh heaven and the '*Kursī*' is (a distance of) five hundred years. Between the '*Kursī*' and the water is (a distance of) five hundred years. The Throne is above the water. Allāh is above the Throne and nothing whatsoever of your deeds is hidden from Him."³⁶

Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) had taken this from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) himself because it is a matter of the unseen. The Prophet's Companions would not speak about (the) unseen matters unless they took them from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) himself. The recent scholar of *tafsīr*, Shaykh al-'Uthaymīn, said in (AH1421: 2/540), "This *ḥadīth* stops at Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) (it is *mawqūf* meaning that is Ibn Mas'ūd statement), but this matter of the unseen is one of the matters concerning which there is no room for personal opinion since they are definitive and must have come from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) himself. Therefore, it comes under the heading of those narrations that whose chains go back to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Also, Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) is not known to have taken anything derived from previous scriptures (the 'People of the Book')."

The narration of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه) clearly shows that the *Kursī* is not the Throne. The Throne is above the *Kursī*, and is above all of creation. Ibn al-Qayyim (:19984/1308) said, "If Allāh is separate from His creation³⁷, then either He is encompassing them or He is

³⁶Imam Ibn Khuzaymah (d.AH311) in (1997:2/885) in *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*. Also see al-Dārimī in *al-Radd 'alā Bishr* cited in 'Aqā'id al-Salaf (2007:336). Al-Bayhaqī (1993:401) in *al-Asmā' wal- Ṣifāt*. This report was classed as authentic by Imam Ibn al-Qayyim (1993:87) in *Ijtīmā' al-Juyūsh al-Islāmiyyah*; al-Dhahabī (64) cited in Shaykh al-Albānī (1991:103) with an authentic chain.

³⁷ Being separate from creation means that He is not part of creation but above it. This is the belief of *Ahlu Sunnah wal Jamā'ah* which was expressed by consensus of the scholars in the early centuries. For example, Imam Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d.AH277)

not. If He is encompassing them, then He must be above them, because that which encompasses must necessarily be above that which is encompassed. Hence, because the heavens encompass the earth, they must be above it. Likewise, because the *Kursī* encompasses the heavens, it must be above them, and because the Throne encompasses the *Kursī*, it must be above it. Whatever encompasses anything must necessarily be above it. This does not imply that there is physical contact with anything that He encompasses: Neither is there any similarity nor resemblance between Him and that which He encompasses.”

Imam al-Tabarī quoted the narrator Juwaybir that the successor Hasan al-Baṣrī (d.AH110) said incorrectly that the *Kursī* is the Throne.³⁸ However, the *ḥadīth* scholar Ibn Hajar replied to this error and said this is a very weak report, meaning that it is not authentic. Likewise, Ibn Kathīr (2003:1/13) replied to this error and said, “Ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī narrated this from Juwaybir but he is a weak narrator, so this report is not authentic from Hasan al-Baṣrī. Rather, what is authentically reported from him and other Companions of the Prophet and the Successors is that the *Kursī* is something other than the Throne.”

Furthermore, Al-Bayhaqī said regarding Imam al-Tabarī’s statement from Hasan al-Baṣrī, “This is not pleasing to be accepted. The Prophetic traditions confirm that the *Kursī* is a creation in front of the Throne and the Throne is greater than it.”³⁹

and Imam Abū Zur’a al-Rāzī (d.AH264) from the third century both stated in their treatise “Allāh is separate (*Ba’in*) from His creation”. Shaykh al-Maḍkhalī R. (2012:53). This consensus was also mentioned by the third century scholar al-Dārimī (d.AH280) “The previous nation never doubted that Allāh is above the heavens separate from His creation” (*Al-Radd ‘alā Bishr* p.64).

³⁸ Imam Ibn Kathīr (1/310), al-Suyūṭī (1/328), Zamakhsharī (1/301). Cited in al-Dhahabī (1999: 1/305) in *Kitāb al-‘Arsh*.

³⁹ See Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (2001:6/584-585) in *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*.

The mainstream scholar of *tafsīr*, Shaykh al-'Uthaymīn, (AH1423b:3/254) said, "The *Kursī* is the place of the Feet of Allāh, the Most High and in front of the 'Arsh as has authentically been reported from the Prophet's Companion, Ibn 'Abbās.⁴⁰ What has been reported that Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) has taken from the People of the Book is not authentic. What is authentically reported in al-Bukhārī (Chapter *Al-I'tsām bi Sunnah* no.7363) is that Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) used to forbid taking narrations from the people of the Book. Mainstream Sunni *tafsīr* scholars believe that the *Kursī* is the place of the Feet of Allāh, the Most High and this is what Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah asserted. Likewise, Imam Ibn al-Qayyim and other scholars said the same. It is said that the *Kursī* is the 'Arsh; however, the 'Arsh' is greater, wider and vast in space than the *Kursī*. It is also said that the *Kursī* is His 'Knowledge', reported from the Prophet's Companion, Ibn 'Abbās which is also not authentic and opposes what is originally narrated from him. Furthermore, to claim that the *Kursī* is His 'Knowledge' is not known in the Arabic language nor in the reality of the legislation so it is far away from being authentically reported from Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه)."

THE KURSĪ IS NOT THE MULK (DOMINION) OR SOVEREIGNTY

Concerning the *Kursī*, Allāh says, "*His Kursī extends over the heavens and the earth.*"⁴¹

It was said that this is the Throne, but the mainstream Sunni view is that it is something else.

⁴⁰ See Al-Tabarānī's *Mu'jam al-Kabir* no.12404. al-Haythamī said: "The narrators are all reliable." [*Majma' al-Zawā'id* (6/326)]. See *Mustadrak* of al-Hākim (1990:1/172) who said it is authentic upon the condition set by Imām al-Bukhārī and Muslim. Imām al-Dhahabī agreed.

⁴¹ Sūrah Al-Baqarah: 255

The meaning of *Kursī*, according to al-Qurtubī in his *tafsīr* (AH1413:4/277), “The leaders of those who reject the existence of Allāh considered the *Kursī* to mean the greatness of the Sovereignty and noble Authority. They negate the existence of the *Kursī* and the ‘*Arsh* and consider them to be nothing. The people of truth assert the apparent meaning of these (*Kursī* and the ‘*Arsh*) because the power of Allāh is vast and it is a must to believe in that.”

What is clear is that the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned that the *Kursī* is greater than the heavens and the earth so the *Kursī* cannot be His Authority because in the next part of the Prophetic tradition the comparison of the *Kursī* to the ‘*Arsh* is like a ring in a desert. That would mean that the ‘*Arsh* is greater than the Authority of Allāh. Therefore, *Kursī* cannot mean the Authority of Allāh, based upon the clear authentic Prophetic tradition. Also, to say that the *Kursī* refers to the Authority of Allāh goes against the statement of the Prophet’s Companion, Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه), who clearly said that the *Kursī* is the Footstool of The Most Merciful. This is what has authentically been reported.

The non-Mainstream *tafsīr* by Sayyid Qutb was mainly based upon political and social unrest in Egypt. This diverted him away from gaining Islamic knowledge from the source of the Qur’ān and Prophetic traditions. When he embarked upon the project of explaining the Qur’ān, his *tafsīr* lacked guidance and direction towards the mainstream Sunni belief in many aspects of the Islamic religion. This also had an effect upon his understanding of the belief in Allāh such as His Names and Attributes. Growing up in Egypt in the twentieth century, Sayyid Qutb was influenced by the current climate of the Ash’arite, Mu’tazilite and Jahmite schools of thought. For example, Qutb, in *al-Zilāl* (AH1412:4/2478) wrote, commenting upon the following verse:

قُلْ: مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

“Say: Who is Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the Great Throne?”⁴²

“And the **Throne is symbolic allusion** to loftiness (in status, rank), and domination, control over the existence.”

This clearly shows that Sayyid Quṭb did not even consider the Throne to be real, similar to the non-Mainstream of al-Razi and Zamakhshari. Rather, he considered the Throne of Allāh to be just a symbolic allusion. In *al-Zilāl* (AH1412: 6/3872), he wrote, commenting upon the following verse:

دُرُ الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدُ. فَقَالَ لِمَا يُرِيدُ

“Honourable owner of the Throne, Effector of what He intends.”⁴³

“And these are Attributes that portray absolute domination, absolute control (*Al-Haymanah*), absolute power and absolute will.”

And in *al-Zilāl* (AH1412:6/3680), he wrote, commenting upon following the verse:

وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَانِيَةٌ

“And there will bear the Throne of your Lord above them, that Day, eight (of them).”⁴⁴

“Just as we do not know what the ‘*Arsh* is, We also do not know how it is carried.” And in *al-Zilāl*, Quṭb commented on the fourth verse in Sūrah Al-Sajdah:

⁴² Sūrah Al-Mu’minūn: 86

⁴³ Sūrah Al-Burūj: 15

⁴⁴ Sūrah Al-Hāqqah: 17

ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ

“Then He *Istawā* (rose over) the Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty).”⁴⁵

Sayyid Quṭb (AH1412: 5/2807) said, “*Istawā* upon the ‘*Arsh* is a symbolic allusion for His loftiness (in status, rank) over all the creation. As for the ‘*Arsh* itself then we have no way of saying anything about it. It is necessary to halt at its wording. But the *Istawā* is not like that. For what is apparent is that it is an allusion to loftiness (in status, rank).” .

In the above quotes is a denial of the reality of the Throne which is confirmed by the Prophet’s Companions and their Successors. It is also a denial based upon the doctrines of the Jahmites in negating Allāh being above the Throne. This is a recurring theme in *al-Zilāl*.

Allāh’s ascension means that He is above the Heavens, above the Throne, with His Essence. This is a matter which all revealed Books and all sent Messengers have agreed upon. This opinion-based *tafsīr* appeared in history with the Jews and Christians and followed through with the appearance of the Jahmites and the Mu’tazilites. They denied much of the Book and the Sunnah pertaining to Allāh’s Names and Attributes. Quṭb fell into negating the Attributes of Allāh. In his commentary on the Qur’ān, in *al-Zilāl*, he made *ta’wīl* (opinion-based explanation) of the ‘*Arsh* and the *Kursī* (foot-stool). He rejected Allāh being above the Throne by His essence and hence rejected the Attribute ‘*Istawā*’.

“Today, the Muslims have been burdened with the books and methodology of Sayyid Quṭb. These were spread amongst and propagated such that it blinded many Muslims. They did not

⁴⁵ Sūrah Al-Sajdah: 4

realise its danger nor its destructive harm.” Shaykh Rabi’ al-Madkhalī (2000:2)

THE KURSĪ IS NOT KNOWLEDGE

The Jahmites believed that the *Kursī* refers to the Knowledge of Allāh,⁴⁶ extending over the heavens and the earth. They did this so that they could deny that Allāh is above the *Kursī* and the ‘*Arsh*. They quote Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) as saying that the *Kursī* means the Knowledge of Allāh. This report was actually quoted also by Imam Ibn Kathīr in his *tafsīr* of the *Kursī* verse (al-Baqarah:255) but it does not have an authentic chain of narration, as al-Dārimī (d.AH280) said, “It is by way of Ja’far al-Aḥmar and he is not one of the narrators that is relied upon because many of the reliable narrators opposed him.”⁴⁷

Imam al-Ṭabarī in his *tafsīr* reported two meanings of *Kursī*; one that it refers to ‘His Knowledge’ and the other he said refers to the ‘*Arsh* but leaned towards the *Kursī* being ‘His knowledge’. However, the scholar of *tafsīr* Maḥmūd Shākir in al-Ṭabarī (AH1374:5/401) said these two statements of Imam al-Ṭabarī in his *tafsīr* are both incorrect.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (2001:6/584) said, “It is reported from some of them that *Kursī* refers to ‘His Knowledge’ and this is a weak position to hold since the Knowledge of Allāh extends over everything not just as far as the heavens and earth as Allāh said:

رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَرَحْمَةُ رَبِّنَا

⁴⁶ Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (2001: 5:60) in *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā*.

⁴⁷ Cited in al-Dhahabī (1999: 1/304) *Kitāb al-‘Arsh*.

“Our Lord, You have comprehended all things in Mercy and Knowledge.”⁴⁸

THE MEANING OF *KURSĪ* IS NOT JUST TO SHOW ALLĀH’S GREATNESS, PRIDE AND HONOUR

As for the *Kursī* referring to the greatness of Allāh and His Pride and Honour, this has been mentioned by the non-Mainstream *tafsīr* of al-Rāzī (2005:7/12). Firstly, al-Rāzī himself after mentioning it said it was a weak statement, “Leaving the apparent without proof is not allowed and Allāh knows best.”

Secondly, this statement was clarified by the scholar of *tafsīr* al-Ālūsī (AH1431:3/397/398). He said that many who opposed asserting the apparent meaning of the Attributes of Allāh used this explanation for the *Kursī* as they, according to themselves, did not want to liken Allāh to creation. Rather, *Kursī* is a real creation, as the authentic Prophetic reports confirm, as well as the explanation of the Prophet’s Companions. Similar to al-Rāzī, the non-mainstream *tafsīr* by Zamakhsharī (2009:1/481) asserted that the *Kursī* is actually not real!

However, the Dominion of Allāh extends far beyond the heavens and the earth as al-Fawzan (2001:124,125) mentioned, “Allāh created the heavens and the earth, the *Kursī* and the ‘*Arsh*. All of these are creations of Allāh. The heavens are above the earth. The water is above the heavens. Above the water is the *Kursī* and above the *Kursī* is the Throne. The Throne is the highest of creations... And Allāh is above the Throne. The *Kursī* is under the Throne...and cannot mean knowledge because the *Kursī* is created but the knowledge of Allāh is not created as it is an Attribute of His. We cannot say that the Throne is His Dominion since the Throne is

⁴⁸ Sūrah Al-Ghāfir: 7

created and eight enormous angels are carrying it as in the following verse:

وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَانِيَةٌ

“And eight angels will, that Day, bear the Throne of your Lord above them.”⁴⁹

How can it be said that the angels are carrying His Dominion?”

Furthermore, to show that the *Kursī* does not mean knowledge or Dominion as is clear from the Prophetic narration, “Fifty thousand years before creation of the heavens and the earth, Allāh determined the fate (*Qadar*) of the creatures when His Throne was on the water.”⁵⁰ We cannot say that His Knowledge or Dominion was on the water and that restricts the Knowledge and Dominion of Allāh.

⁴⁹ Sūrah Al-Hāqqah: 17

⁵⁰ *Saḥīḥ Muslim* (2005) no.4803. Cited from Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (1996:184) in *Sharḥ al-‘Aqidah al-Wasīṭiyyah*.

The Attribute of Allāh's 'Face'

The Attribute of the 'Face' ascribed to Allāh occurs more than once in the Qur'ān. For example, Allāh mentions the Attribute of 'Face' in:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ

"And keep yourself patiently with those who call on their Lord, morning and afternoon, **seeking His Face.**"⁵¹

Mainstream *tafsīr* scholars show that asserting the apparent meaning of Attributes 'Face' or 'Hands' is in no way likening Allāh to creation as it is not known how these Attributes are (*bilā kayf*). These Attributes are left as they are without distorting them from the apparent meaning. Just as the apparent meaning of Allāh's Hearing, Seeing, *Istawā* was asserted by mainstream *tafsīr* scholars. Similarly, all other apparent meanings of Allāh's Attributes are asserted without likening Allāh to His creation. For example, our hearing is limited but Allāh's Hearing is unlimited. Our seeing is limited but His Seeing is unlimited. His *istawā* (rising above) does not resemble any of His creation rising up above something. Likewise, His 'Face' cannot be likened to creation according to mainstream *tafsīr*. This is in line with the verses in the Qur'ān clarifying that Allāh does not resemble any of His creation:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

"There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, All-Seer."⁵²

As for the verses that mention the Attribute 'Face,' there are many examples of them:

وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

⁵¹ Sūrah Al-Kahf: 28

⁵² Sūrah Al-Shūrā: 11

“And the **Face of your Lord** full of Majesty and Honour will remain forever.”⁵³

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Imam Ibn Kathīr (1999:43/272), said, “Allāh mentions that all of the inhabitants upon the earth will perish, they will die altogether and likewise the inhabitants of the heavens except those whom Allāh wills. And none shall remain except His Honourable ‘Face’ for Allāh, the Perfect does not die, rather He is the Ever-Living and does not die.”

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Shaykh al-Shanqīṭī (AH1426b:7:75), said, “The ‘Face’ is one of the Attributes of Allāh, the Most High which Allāh described Himself with. Upon us is to trust in our Lord and believe in that which He has described Himself with, with complete negation of any resemblance to His creation.”

Another verse mentioning the attribute ‘Face’ of Allāh is:

إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَى

“Except only the desire to **seek the Face of His Lord**, the Most High.”⁵⁴

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Imam al-Baghawī (AH1400:1/168), in *Sharḥ Sunnah*, after mentioning some of the Attributes of Allāh including Face, Hands, descending and rising above the ‘Arsh, said, “This and similar to it is among the Attributes of Allāh which the Qur’ān and Sunnah have mentioned. Therefore, it is obligatory to believe in them and to narrate them (the Attributes of Allāh) with their apparent meaning whilst keeping far away from interpreting them with a distorted interpretation (*ta’wīl*), keeping away from likening Allāh to His

⁵³ Sūrah Ar-Rahmān: 27

⁵⁴ Sūrah Al-Layl: 20

creation, believing that nothing else resembles the Originator of creation neither His Essence nor His Attributes, as Allāh said:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

“There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, All-Seer.”⁵⁵

The righteous Predecessors and scholars of Sunnah were upon this. They met these Attributes with acceptance and faith...”

Another verse asserting the apparent meaning of the ‘Face’ of Allāh is:

إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِرُجْهِ اللَّهِ

“We feed you only seeking the Face of Allāh.”⁵⁶

From the Sunnah, is the saying of the Messenger (ﷺ), from the Companion Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī (رضي الله عنه), “His Veil is made of light and if He was to uncover it, the *subuhāt* (splendors, radiances) of His ‘Face’ would destroy everything of His creation that His Sight would reach.”⁵⁷

From this narration, it is apparent that the Attribute ‘Face’ does not refer to ‘reward’ nor other such interpretations. How is it possible for ‘reward’ to be described by ‘Majesty and Honour’ in the verse above? How is it possible for it to have ‘splendors, radiances’ that destroy everything in sight? Additionally, there are many different supplications where the Messenger (ﷺ) sought refuge with the ‘Face’ of Allāh and how he (ﷺ) distinguished between the Essence of Allāh (*dhāt*) and the ‘Face’ of Allāh (*wajh*) in the same supplication such as:

⁵⁵ Sūrah Al-Shūrā: 11

⁵⁶ Sūrah Al-Insān: 9

⁵⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Book of Faith 78/79, no.446).

“I seek refuge in Allāh the Mighty (Al-‘Azīm) and in His Noble ‘Face’ and His Eternal Power from the accursed satan.”⁵⁸

Is it then correct to seek refuge in a ‘Face’ which means ‘reward’ or ‘dominion’ as suggested by some translators who did not assert the apparent meaning of the Attribute ‘Face’? Reward and dominion are but created things and seeking refuge in something created is in fact an incorrect aspect of worship since Muslims are not permitted to worship anything created.

From the Qur’ānic verse [AL-INSĀN: 9], it is apparent that the Attribute ‘Face’ should not be translated as ‘reward’ in the first instance because this is not the apparent meaning of the Prophetic narrations above. There are other Prophetic narrations that explain the Qur’ānic verses regarding the Attribute ‘Face’, showing that the believers will see Allāh’s ‘Face’ in Paradise on the Day of Judgement and this is what is meant by ‘seeking His ‘Face’’. For example:

لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ

“Those who have done good, for them is the best reward (paradise) and **something more**.”⁵⁹

It has been explained by the Messenger (ﷺ) that it means, “*Looking at His ‘Face’, the Most High*”⁶⁰. Therefore, translators need to adhere to translating the Attribute ‘*wajh*’ – ‘وجه’ – as ‘Face’ in accordance with the Prophetic tradition, otherwise it would be said that the believers in Paradise will be looking at something imaginary. The scholar of *hadith*, al-Bukhārī (d.AH256), asserts the apparent meaning of the Attribute ‘Face’ in his *Saḥīḥ* compilation regarding the verse:

⁵⁸Saḥīḥ Sunan Abū Dāwūd (1988) no.466.

⁵⁹Sūrah Yūnus: 26

⁶⁰ *Saḥīḥ Muslim* (2005:1/163).

وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ

“And invoke not any other *ilah* (god) along with Allāh, *Lā ilaha illa Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He). Everything will perish **save His Face**.”⁶¹

Imam Al-Bukhārī states, “Chapter – The Statement of Allāh: *‘Everything shall perish save His ‘Face’*.”⁶²

Another Prophetic tradition asserting the apparent attribute of Allāh, ‘Face’ is the following narration: Jābir b. Abdullāh (رضي الله عنه) said, “When this verse, ‘Say (O Muḥammad): He has Power to send punishment on you from above’ (6:65), was revealed, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “I seek refuge with Your ‘Face’ “. Allāh revealed, ““Or from underneath your feet” (6:65), and the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) repeated, “I seek refuge with Your ‘Face’ ...”

As for the following verse:

وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُولُوا فَتَمَّ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“To Allāh belongs the east and the west, so wherever you turn (yourselves or your faces), there is the **Face of Allāh** (and He is High above, over His throne).”⁶³

The scholar of mainstream Imam al-Tabarī (2001:2/677) in his *tafsir*, mentioned different interpretations of the above verse, but he did not himself interpret it to mean other than the apparent meaning of the Attribute ‘Face’ for Allāh in a way which befits His Majesty.

The scholar of mainstream Shaykh al-Sa’dī (2002:63,64) said in his *tafsir* regarding the verse:

⁶¹ Sūrah Al-Qasas: 88 [KHAN AND HILALI TRANSLATION]

⁶² *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* at the end of his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*

⁶³ Sūrah Al-Baqarah: 115

وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ

“To Allāh belongs the east and the west, so wherever you turn (yourselves or your faces), there is the Face of Allāh (and He is High above, over His throne).”⁶⁴

“In it is an assertion of the ‘Face’ of Allāh, the Most High, befitting for Him, and Allāh has a ‘Face’ which no other faces are similar to.”

Some scholars of *tafsīr* after asserting the apparent meaning of the Attribute ‘Face’ for Allāh added that the context was referring to direction. The context refers to which direction the traveller turns towards. So when a person prays and he errs in finding the right direction to pray, then wherever he turns he will be facing Allāh. This is similar to the narration whereby the Messenger (ﷺ) said that, “Allāh continues to face the servant in his prayer so long as the servant does not turn away his face, so if he turns his face then Allāh likewise turns away from him.”⁶⁵

Shaykh al-‘Uthaymīn (AH1423b:13) said that the scholars of *tafsīr* differed regarding the above verse (Al-Baqarah:115) in particular. Some said that it refers to Allāh’s ‘Face’ in reality and some said it refers to the direction of Allāh when you turn to Him in prayer because Allāh (His Knowledge) encompasses everything. Nevertheless, the mainstream *tafsīr* scholars are in agreement that the attribute ‘Face’ of Allāh must be asserted as a point of belief without likening Allāh to creation.

Khān and al-Hilālī asserted the Attribute ‘Face’ for Allāh in their translation of:

يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ

⁶⁴ Sūrah Al-Baqarah: 115

⁶⁵ Authentically reported in *Sunan Abū Dāwūd* and *Saḥīḥ al-Targhib* (2000) no.555.

as, “seeking His ‘Face’.”⁶⁶

Khān and al-Hilālī also assert Allāh’s Attribute ‘Face’ in other verses that mentioned ‘الوجه’ such as in:

وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

And the ‘Face’ of your Lord full of Majesty and Honour will abide forever.⁶⁷

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ

Everything will perish save His ‘Face’. His is the Decision, and to Him you (all) shall be returned.⁶⁸

وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُولُوا فَجْهَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“And to Allāh belong the east and the west, so wherever you turn yourselves or your faces **there is the Face of Allāh** (and He is High above, over His Throne).”⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Sūrah Kahf: 28

⁶⁷ Sūrah Al-Rahmān: 27

⁶⁸ Sūrah Al-Qasas: 88

⁶⁹ Sūrah Al-Baqarah: 115

The Attribute ‘Hand’

Another Attribute of Allāh which has caused difficulty for translators is the Attribute of Allāh’s ‘Hands’ which are mentioned in the Qur’ān either in the singular, dual or plural (sense). According to mainstream *tafsīr*, like *istawā*, this Attribute is asserted but without likening Allāh to creation and without giving the Attribute another metaphorical meaning such as ‘power’ since this does not have a basis in the Qur’ān and Prophetic traditions. Rather, it is to speak about Allāh without knowledge, and that is prohibited in the Qur’ān:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

“And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned.”⁷⁰

The mainstream scholar of *tafsīr*, Imam Ibn Kathīr (1999:1126), explains the first verse in Sūrah Al-Mulk:

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“Blessed is He in Whose **Hand** is the dominion, and He is Able to do all things.”⁷¹

“The Attributes ‘Hands’ are clearly mentioned in the Qur’ān, the Sunnah and the consensus.”

Ibn al-Qayyim said, “The Attribute ‘Hand’ has been mentioned in the Qur’ān, Sunnah and speech of the Prophet’s Companions and

⁷⁰ Sūrah Al-Isrā’: 36

⁷¹ Sūrah Al-Mulk: 1

their Successors in more than one hundred places with a variety of situations showing that the (Attribute) ‘Hand’ is real.”⁷²

From the Qur’ān:

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلُعِنُوا بِمَا قَالُوا بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ يُنفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ

“And the Jews say, “The hand of Allāh is chained.” Chained are their hands, and cursed are they for what they say. Rather, both His **hands** are extended; He spends however He wills.”⁷³

The scholar of mainstream *tafsir*, Imam al-Tabarī (AH1374:10/455) said regarding the verse above, “Others have said that the ‘Hand’ of Allāh is an Attribute of Allāh except that it is not similar to the hands of the children of Adam. This is because Allāh, the Most High, mentioned that He has distinguished Adam by creating him with His own ‘Hands.’ If the meaning of ‘Hand’ was blessing, power or kingdom, there would not be an understanding of what the distinction of the creation of Adam is, since all of His creation is created by His Power, His will and He is the Master over all of them.”

The scholar of mainstream *tafsir*, Imam al-Baghawī (2002:1/694) said regarding this verse, “the ‘Hand’ of Allāh is one of His Attributes like ‘Hearing’, ‘Seeing’ and ‘Face’.”

The scholar of mainstream *tafsir*, Shaykh Ṣiddiq Ḥasan Khān (1965:3/59), said, “The ‘Hand’ of Allāh is one of His Attributes like His ‘Hearing’, ‘Seeing’ and ‘Face’ so it is obligatory on us to believe in it, submit and assert it for Him and to read it as it is found in the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah without saying how (*bilā kayf*),

⁷²Cited from Muḥammad b. al-Mawṣilī (2004:3/984) in *Mukhtaṣar Ṣawā’iq al-Mursalāh*.

⁷³Sūrah Al-Mā’idah: 64

without likening his ‘Hand’ to His creation and without denying it.” Allāh said:

قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإَيْدِي أَسْتَكْبَرْتَ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعَالِينَ

“[Allāh] said: ‘O Iblees, what prevented you from prostrating to that which I created with My **hands**? Were you arrogant [then], or were you [already] among the haughty?’”⁷⁴

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Imam al-Baghawī (2002:1/694) said regarding this verse, “The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Both his ‘Hands’ are right.” Allāh knows His Attributes so the worshippers of Allāh should believe in them and submit. The scholars of the righteous Predecessors said regarding these Attributes, ‘Leave them as they are, without knowing how they are (*bilā kayf*)’.” Abū al-Hasan al-Ash’arī (d.AH324) said, “If Allāh intended by this verse (“[Allāh] said: ‘O Iblees, what prevented you from prostrating to that which I created with My **hands**?”) ‘**Power**’, then Adam would not have any distinction from satan (*Iblīs*) and Allāh wanted to show the superiority of Adam over satan. If Allāh had also created Satan with His ‘Hands’ then he (Satan) would have also used this as proof that he is the same as Adam. Allāh wanted to show Adam’s superiority over satan. Allāh replied to satan as a response to his pride over Adam for not prostrating to him (Sūrah Sād: 75). This proves that the meaning of ‘Hand’ in the verse is not ‘Power’ because Allāh created everything with His Power but Allāh wanted to show the confirmation of His two ‘Hands’ and satan was not created by them.”⁷⁵

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Shaykh al-Sa’dī (2002: 717), said, “Allāh honoured, blessed and specified Adam with this (creating

⁷⁴ Sūrah Sād: 75

⁷⁵ Cited in Ibn Baṭṭa (2002:453,454), *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* of Imam Ibn Khuzaymah (1997:1/199), *Al-Asmā’ wa Ṣifāt* of al-Bayhaqī (1993:2/127), *Mukhtaṣar Ṣawā’iq al-Mursalāh* of Imam Ibn al-Qayyim (2004:3/951,952).

him with His own ‘Hands’) over all of the creation. This necessitates not being arrogant towards him.”

In another verse, Allāh said,

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ
سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

“They made not a just estimate of Allāh such as is due to Him. And on the Day of Resurrection the whole of the earth will be grasped by His ‘Hand’ and the heavens will be rolled up in His Right **Hand**. Glorified is He, and High is He above all that they associate as partners with Him!”⁷⁶

The scholar of mainstream *tafsir*, Imam Ibn Kathīr (1999: 948) said regarding this verse, “Many Prophetic texts explaining this blessed verse and the mainstream Sunni path regarding it and those like it (where Allāh’s Attributes are discussed) is to follow the path of the righteous Predecessors (the Prophet’s Companions and their Successors) and that is to read the Attributes as they are (affirm and believe in them in their apparent sense) without delving into how they are and without distortion.”

The scholar of mainstream *tafsir*, Shaykh al-‘Uthaymīn (2004:247) said that among the benefits of this verse is that Allāh mentioned ‘His Hand’ and that which is attributed to His Essence cannot resemble the creation just as His Essence cannot resemble the creation.”

In another verse, the Attribute ‘Hand’ is mentioned in the plural sense.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا خَلَقْنَا لَهُمْ مِمَّا عَمِلَتْ أَيْدِينَا أَنْعَامًا فَهُمْ لَهَا مَالِكُونَ

⁷⁶ Sūrah Az-Zumar: 67

“Do they not see that We have created for them of what Our **Hands** have created, the cattle, so that they are their owners.”⁷⁷

Some non-mainstream *tafsīr* compilations such as al-Suyūṭī (2002:476) have mentioned that the Attribute ‘Hands’ means Allāh’s ‘power’ following the Ash‘arite creed of *ta’wīl*. Al-Suyūṭī did not assert the apparent meaning of the attribute ‘Hand’ in the 67th verse of Chapter Az-Zumar. However, this is rejected by mainstream *tafsīr* because the Attribute of Allāh, ‘Hand’ is sometimes mentioned in the dual sense and you cannot limit Allāh’s power to being restricted to two. Regarding Allāh’s Hands being mentioned in the dual sense, Shaykh al-‘Uthaymīn (1995:20) states the apparent meaning of the verse:

بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ

“Both His **hands** are extended.”⁷⁸

... is that Allāh has two real ‘Hands’ so one must assert that for Him. If one says that this means ‘power’, we reply to them and say this is taking away the speech from its apparent sense and therefore leads you to speaking about Allāh without knowledge.”

Also, it would not make sense in the language to say that Allāh’s power is only limited to two and that both his powers are extended.

There are numerous Prophetic texts asserting the apparent meaning of the two ‘Hands’ of Allāh without likening them to creation, for example,

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “The just ones with Allāh will be upon pulpits of light on the Right ‘Hand’ of the Most Merciful, and both His ‘Hands’ are Right.”⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Sūrah Yā-Sīn: 71

⁷⁸ Sūrah Al-Mā’idah: 64

⁷⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (2005:2/886) no. 1827, Book of leadership.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “The Right ‘Hand’ of Allāh is full and charity does not decrease it in the night and day. Have you come to know what He has given in charity since creating the heavens and earth? It does not decrease what is in His Right ‘Hand’ and justice with His other ‘Hand,’ raising (people) and debasing (them) until the Day of Judgement (according to their faith).”⁸⁰

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “The Lord will take the heavens and earth with his ‘Hands’ and will say, “I am the Most Merciful”. ”⁸¹

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Indeed Allāh outstretches His ‘Hands’ (for forgiveness) in the night for those who sin in the day and He outstretches His ‘Hands’(for forgiveness) in the day time or those who sin at night.”⁸²

As for the consensus of the scholars, then many scholars have confirmed this consensus showing the apparent meaning of the Attribute Hands for Allāh. Amongst them are: Abū al-Abbās Ahmad b. ‘Umar b. Suraij⁸³, Harb al-Kirmānī (d.AH280)⁸⁴, Abū al-Hasan al-Ash‘arī(d.AH324)⁸⁵, Imam al-Ajurri(d.AH360)⁸⁶, Imam al-Sijzi (d.AH444), Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah(d.AH728) and others.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (2001:3/174) said, “The scholars of Sunnah have all agreed as to the reality of these Attributes.”

⁸⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (1993:4/386), Book of *Tawḥīd* no.7411.

⁸¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (2005:2/1258) no.2788, Book of the characteristics of Paradise and Hell-fire.

⁸² *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (2005:2/1265) no.2759, Book of repentance.

⁸³ Cited from al-Dhahabī (AH1420:2/1216).

⁸⁴ Cited in *Ijmā‘ al-Salaffi al-I‘tiqād* of al-Kirmānī Harb (2011:61).

⁸⁵ Cited in al-Risālah ilā Ahl al-Thagr of al-Ash‘arī (2007:193)

⁸⁶ Cited in *al-Sharī‘ah* of al-Ājurri (1996:3/1178).

Imam al-Ajurri (1996:2/127) said, “It is said to the Jahmite, the one who denies Adam was created with the ‘Hands of Allāh’, that you have disbelieved in the Qur’ān and rejected the Sunnah and have opposed the Ummah (consensus of the Muslims).”

Imam al-Sijzī (d.AH444) in (1994:173) said, “The scholars of Sunnah are in agreement that Allāh has two ‘Hands.’ This has been reported in the texts and narrations, as Allāh said, “With what I have created with my own ‘Hands’.” and the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “both His ‘Hands’ are Right”.”

The Attribute ‘Eyes’

The scholars of mainstream *tafsir* believe that Allāh has two ‘Eyes’ that befit His Majesty. As with all the Attributes of Allāh, Mainstream *tafsir* scholars believe that these Attributes should not be imagined or compared to those of the creation. The Attribute of ‘Eyes’ for Allāh has been mentioned in the Qur’ān and the authentic Prophetic narrations as well as the consensus of the righteous Predecessors. Allāh said:

وَاصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا

“And construct the ship under **Our Eyes** and with Our Revelation.”⁸⁷

وَلِتُصْنَعَ عَلَى عَيْنِي

“In order that you may be brought up under **My Eye**.”⁸⁸

وَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا

“So wait patiently (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) for the Decision of your Lord, for verily, you are under **Our Eyes**.”⁸⁹

The Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) said, “Allāh is not hidden from you; He is not one-eyed.”, and he [the Prophet] pointed with his fingers to his two ‘Eyes’, adding, while *al-Dajjāl* (the Antichrist) is blind in the right eye’⁹⁰.

The scholar of mainstream *tafsir*, Imam al-Ṭabarī (AH1374), said that, ‘وَاصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا’, means “under our Eye and revelation just as He has commanded since Prophet Nūḥ (عليه السلام) did not know how to build the Ark.” This shows that Imam al-Ṭabarī asserted the

⁸⁷ Sūrah Hūd: 37

⁸⁸ Sūrah Tā-Hā: 39

⁸⁹ Sūrah Tūr: 48

⁹⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (1993) no.7407, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (2005) no.2933.

Attribute ‘Eye’ for Allāh. Likewise, the scholar al-Qurtubī, M. said that, ‘وَاضَعَ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيُنَا’ means, “under our sight.” He also said it means, “under our protection and knowledge.”

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Imam al-Baghawī (2002:2/399), mentioned the explanation of the verse, ‘وَاضَعَ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيُنَا’⁹¹: “The Prophet’s Companion Ibn ‘Abbās said, ‘*under Our Sight.*’”

Al-Baghawī (2002:3/121) mentioned the explanation of the verse ‘وَلْيُضَنَّ عَلَى غَنِيٍّ’⁹² that it means, “that you may be cultivated under Our Sight.”

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Imam Ibn Kathīr (1999:1049), mentioned the explanation of ‘فَأَبْثُكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا’⁹³ “Under our Sight and Protection and Allāh will protect you (Prophet Mūsā /Moses) from the people.” Here, the Prophet’s Companion, Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه), and the scholars of *tafsīr*, Imam al-Baghawī and Imam Ibn Kathīr, all assert the Attributes ‘Eyes’ for Allāh when they mentioned that ‘بِأَعْيُنِنَا’ means, “under Our Sight.” Imam Ibn Kathīr and al-Qurtubī, M. mentioned the context of the verse which refers to Allāh protecting Prophet Mūsā from Pharoah, who wanted to kill all the newborn males. However, Imam Ibn Kathīr and al-Qurtubī, M. had asserted *initially* the Attributes of ‘Eyes’.

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Shaykh al-Sa’dī (2002:372), also asserted the Attributes of ‘Eyes’ for Allāh when commenting on the above verses that they referred to ‘His Sight’. He also mentioned the meaning in context that the verses also refer to the protection of Allāh. This is not opinion-based *ta’wīl* as this was mentioned by some of the righteous predecessors and other mainstream scholars ***based upon the context while initially asserting*** ‘Eyes’ for Allāh.

⁹¹ Sūrah Hūd: 37

⁹² Sūrah Tā-Hā: 39

⁹³ Sūrah Tūr: 48

Many scholars have mentioned that there is consensus among the righteous Predecessors to assert the apparent meaning of the Attributes of 'Eyes' for Allāh. Amongst them is Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī (AH1411:129)⁹⁴, Abū 'Uthmān al-Sabūnī (1994:165) and later Shaykh al-'Uthaymīn (AH1407:12).

Earlier Sunni scholars asserted the apparent meaning of the Attributes of Allāh, 'Eyes' and that He sees His creation. For example, the third century scholar, Al-Dārimī (d.AH280), in *Naqd 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd* (2012:183,184) said, "In the explanation of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) that Allāh is not one-eyed, is an indication that He sees and has two 'Eyes' in opposition to the blind."

Likewise, Imam Ibn-Khuzaimah (d.AH311) in (1997:1/97) *Kitāb al-Tawhīd* said, "It is the duty of every Muslim to assert for his Lord and Creator what Allāh has asserted for Himself, like the 'Eyes.' A non-believer is the one who negates what Allāh has asserted, in what He has revealed with the clarification of the Prophet (ﷺ). Allāh sent the Prophet (ﷺ) to clarify the Qur'ān. Allāh said, "We revealed to you the Remembrance (Qur'ān) that you may clarify to them what has been revealed to them."⁹⁵

The Prophet (ﷺ) clarified that Allāh has two 'Eyes' and his clarification was in accordance to the Qur'ān."

The fourth-century scholar Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī(d.AH324), in (AH1409:129) said in his book entitled *al-Ibānah*, "Allāh, The Exalted, has mentioned that He has a 'Face' and 'Eyes', and we do not know how they are."

⁹⁴ See also *Maqālāt al-Islamiyyīn* (AH1411:1/345).

⁹⁵ Sūrah An-Nahl: 44

When Allāh said, 'Floating under Our Eyes', he (Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī) in (AH1411:1/345), "The misguided sects like the Mu'tazilites, Jahmites, and the Qādiriyyah denied that Allāh has two 'Eyes' despite the saying of Allāh: 'Floating under Our Eyes'."

The fifth-century (d.AH418) scholar, Imam al-Lālikā'ī (AH1418: 2/457) entitled a chapter in his book *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-I'tiqād Ahli Sunnah Wal Jamā'ah*, "The Chapter on the texts from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of His Prophet (ﷺ) that prove the Attributes of Allāh such as 'Face', two 'Eyes' and two 'Hands'."; then he mentioned the Prophetic narrations regarding Allāh not being one-eyed.

The fifth century (d.AH481) scholar, Abū Isma'il al-Harawī, in (2001:45) said in his book *Arba'in fī dala'il al-Tawḥīd*, "Chapter asserting two 'Eyes' for Him (Allāh), the Exalted." Then he mentioned the *ḥadith* that your Lord is not one-eyed.⁹⁶ The aforementioned scholars of mainstream *tafsīr* have shown that they **asserted the apparent meaning** of the Attributes 'Eyes' for Allāh.

Khān and al-Hilālī asserted the attribute 'Eyes' for Allāh when they translated the verse above (Taha:39) as, "You may be brought up under My Eye." This, along with previous Attributes mentioned shows clearly that they were upon the creed of Ahlu Sunnah wal Jama'ah following the way of the pious predecessors. May Allāh reward them for defending it in their translation of the meaning of the Qur'ān.

The scholar of mainstream *tafsīr*, Shaykh al-'Uthaymīn (AH1419:1/314), said, "If it is said that some of the righteous Predecessors have said that, 'under Our eyes' means 'under our

⁹⁶ Cited in Shaykh al-'Uthaymīn (AH1413) *Fatāwā al-'Aqidah* (90-96).

care' and that you say to distort the meaning of the Attribute is not allowed, so what is your answer? We say that ***they first asserted the Attribute, in this case the 'Eyes'***, then they mentioned the general meaning ***based upon the correct context***. However, the negators of Allāh's Attributes would only mention the general meaning (with an incorrect context as in Power for Hand etc) without asserting the Attributes ('Eyes') for Allāh."

Appendix 1

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (1979:7/145) from his book *al-Tamhīd* regarding the position of the mainstream Muslims on the Attributes of Allāh.

يفزعون منها، لأنها لا تصلح إلا فيما يحاط به عياناً. وقد جل الله وتعالى عن ذلك، وما غاب عن الميرون. فلا يصفه ذوو العقول إلا بخبر. ولا خبر في صفات الله إلا ما وصف نفسه به في كتابه. أو على لسان رسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم. فلا تتمدى ذلك إلى تشبيه أو قياس أو تمثيل أو تنظير. فإنه ليس كمثله شيء. وهو السميع البصير.

قال أبو عمر:

أهل السنة مجمعون على الإقرار بالصفات الواردة كلها في القرآن والسنة. والإيمان بها. وحملها على الحقيقة لا على المجاز إلا أنهم لا يكتفون شيئاً من ذلك. ولا يحتلون فيه صفة محصورة. وأما أهل البدع والجهمية والمعتزلة كلها والخوارج. فكلهم ينكروها. ولا يحمل شيئاً منها على الحقيقة. ويزعمون أن من أقربها مثبه. وهم عند من أثبتها نافون للمعبود. والحق فيما قاله القائلون بما نطق به كتاب الله وسنة رسوله. وهم أئمة الجماعة والحمد لله. روى حرمة بن يحيى. قال سمعت عبد الله بن وهب يقول سمعت مالك بن أنس يقول من وصف شيئاً من ذات الله. مثل قوله (وقالت اليهود يد الله مغلولة) (56) وأشار يده إلى عنقه. ومثل قوله (وهو السميع البصير) فأشار إلى عينيه أو أذنه. أو شيئاً من بدنه. قطع ذلك منه لأنه شبه الله بنفسه. ثم قال مالك. أما سمعت قول البراء حين حدث أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال « لا يضحى بأربع من الضحايا» وأشار البراء يده. كما أشار النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يده. (57) قال البراء ويدي أقصر من يد رسول الله صلى

(56) سورة الشورى - آية 64

(57) رواه مالك في الموطأ وأحمد والأربعة

Appendix 2 – The Stages of Repentance of Abū al-Hasan al-Ash‘arī

THE FIRST STAGE OF ABŪ AL-ḤASAN AL-ASH‘ARĪ

THE WAY OF THE MU‘TAZILITES, (TA‘TIL) DENYING THE ATTRIBUTES OF ALLĀH

Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī initially followed the Mu‘tazilites who used to deny the Attributes of Allāh such as Allāh’s ascension above the Throne as they saw that this went against their intellect. The fifth century al-Shafī‘ī scholar, Imam Abū Nasr al-Sijzī (d.AH444) in his treatise to the people of Zabīd called *Radd man Ankara-al-Ḥarf was-Sawt* (1994:140), narrates from Khalf al-Mu‘allim (d.AH371) of the Malikī scholars that he said, “Imām al-Ash‘arī was upon the way of i‘tizāl (Mu‘tazilites) for a period of forty years. Then he repented...”.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (2001:12/178) said, “Abū al-Ḥasan came after him (Ibn Kullāb) and he was a student of Abū ‘Alī al-Jubā‘ī al-Mu‘tazilī. He then turned away from the statements of the Mu‘tazilites.”

THE SECOND STAGE OF ABŪ AL-ḤASAN AL-ASH‘ARĪ

THE WAY OF IBN KULLĀB: (TAHRĪF) DISTORTING THE MEANINGS OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF ALLĀH TO MEAN OTHER THAN THE APPARENT MEANING (TA‘WĪL - ESOTERIC MEANING).

Then the second stage of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī saw him follow the path of Ibn Kullāb who did not reject the Attributes of Allāh like the Mu‘tazilites but affirmed them on the basis of reason. He also affirmed the attributes known through revealed text such as

uluww, face, hands and eyes. However, due to his weakness in arguing with the Mu'tazilah and falling prey to their doubts he denied Allāh's chosen actions (*af'āl ikhtiyāriyyah*) as a result of which he spoke erroneously on the attribute of Speech (*kalām*) for Allāh and other attributes such as Allāh's pleasure and anger which are connected to His will (*mashī'ah*). As a result he was spoken against by mainstream Sunni scholars such as Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d.AH241). Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (1980:2/6) said, "Imām Aḥmad (d.AH241) used to warn against Ibn Kullāb and his followers."

Furthermore, al-Dhahabī quoted Abū Bakr Ibn Khuzaimah in *Siyar 'Alām al-Nubalā* (1993:14/380) as saying, "Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal was amongst the sternest of people in warning against 'Abdullāh b. Sa'id ibn Kullāb and his companions such as al-Ḥarith and others." Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah in *al-Istiqāma* (n.d.: 12/368) said, "The Kullābiyyah are the teachers of the Ash'arites."

THE THIRD STAGE OF ABŪ AL-ḤASAN AL-ASH'ARĪ

THE WAY OF THE SCHOLARS OF MAINSTREAM SUNNAH

The third stage of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī showed that he turned away from distorting the meanings of the lofty Attributes of Allāh, which was the way of Ibn Kullāb. He then followed the way of the scholars of the righteous Predecessors⁹⁷ and mainstream *tafsīr*. Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī clearly showed this by writing three books: *al-Ibāna*, *al-Risāla ilā Ahl al-Thagr* and *Maqālāt al-Islamiyyīn*,

⁹⁷ The Righteous Predecessors refer to the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and those that followed them upon righteousness. They have been mentioned by the Prophet (ﷺ) as the best people of this nation, "The best people are those in my generation, then those that followed, then those that followed." *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* no. 3451.

clearly asserting the apparent meaning of the Attributes of Allāh in the manner He affirmed for Himself without misinterpretation or distortion. This shows that Abū al-Hasan al-Ash'arī was following the path of the pious predecessors in the general sense. This is in refutation of the current day Asharites who do not follow their claimed teacher in repenting from the incorrect belief in not affirming and asserting the Attributes of Allāh as Allāh affirmed for Himself without likening Him to creation.

Bibliography

- AL-'ABBĀD, A. (2002).** *Qaṭf al-Janāl Dānī Sharḥ Muqaddimat al-Risālat Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qirwānī*. Riyadh: Dār al-Faḍīla.
- AL-ĀJURRI, M. (1996).** *Al-Shari'ah*. Cairo: Mu'assasat al-Qurṭubah.
- AL-ALBĀNĪ, M. (1991).** *Mukhtaṣar al-'Ulūw*. Beirut: Maktabah al-Islāmī.
- AL-ĀLŪSĪ, S. (AH1431).** *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm wa Sab' al-Mathānī*. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah.
- AL-ASH'ARĪ, A. H. (AH1411).** *Maqālat al-Islāmiyyīn*. Edited by Muḥammad Muḥyuddin 'Abdulḥamīd. Jeddah: Maktabah al-'Asriyyah al-Dhahabiyyah.
- AL-ASH'ARĪ, A. H. (2007).** *Al-Risālah ilā Ahl al-Thagr*. Alexandria: Dār al-Safa wal Marwa.
- AL-'AYYASHĪ, M. (N.D.).** *Kitāb al-Tafsīr*. Tehran: Maktabah al-'Ilmiyyah al-Islamiyyah.
- AL-BAGHAWĪ, A. M. (AH1400).** *Sharḥ As-Sunnah*. Beirut: Maktabah al-Islāmī.
- AL-BAGHAWĪ, A. M. (2002).** *Tafsīr al-Baghawī*. Riyadh: Dār Taybah.
- BA'ALBAKĪ, R. & M. (2003).** *Al-Mawrid Arabic/ English and English/Arabic*. Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm Lilmalāyīn.
- BA'ALBAKĪ, R. & M. (1996).** *Al-Mawrid*. Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm Lilmalāyīn.
- AL-BAYHAQĪ, ABU BAKR (1993).** *Al-Asmā' wa al-Ṣifāt*. Jeddah: Maktabah al-Suwaydī.
- AL-BUKHĀRĪ, M. (1993).** *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr.

AL-DHAHABĪ, M. A. (AH1420). *Al- 'Ulūww*. Edited by 'Abdullāh b. Sālih al-Barrāk. Riyadh: Dār Waṭan.

AL-DHAHABĪ, M. A. (1993). *Siyar 'Alām al-Nubalā*. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah.

AL-DHAHABĪ, M. A. (1999). *Kitāb al- 'Arsh*. Riyadh: Dār Adwā' al-Salaf.

AL-DHAHABĪ, M. (2003). *Al-Tafsīr wal Mufasssīrīn*. Riyadh: Ministry of Islamic Affairs for Scientific Research.

AL-DĀRIMĪ, 'U. (2007). *Al-Radd 'alā Bishr* cited in *'Aqā'id al-Salaf*. Edited by Dr. 'Alī Sāmī al-Nashar: 'Ammar Jam'ī al-Tālibī. Cairo: Dār al-Salām.

AL-DARIMĪ, 'U. (2012). *Naqd 'Uthmān b. Sa'id al-Darimi*. Edited by Abū Malik Riyāshī Aḥmad: b. 'Alī al-Qufayli. Madinah: Dār al-Nasīḥah.

EHSAN, E. Z. (2011). *The Reality of Bareilawi'ism* edited and adapted from the original work. N.P.: The Orthodox Press.

AL-FAWZAN, S. (2001). *Al-Ta'liqāt al-Mukhtasara 'alā matn al-'Aqīdah al-Tahawiyyah*. Riyadh: Dār al- 'Āsimah.

AL-FAWZAN, S. (2003). *A Glimpse At The Deviated Sects*. Birmingham: Salafi Publications (translation and publication)

AL-HĀKIM, M. (1990). *Al-Mustadrak*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.

AL-HARAWĪ, ABŪ ISMĀ'IL (2001). *Al-Arba'in fī dalā'il al-Tawḥīd*. Madinah: Dār Ibn Rajab.

AL-HAYTHAMĪ A. (N.D.). *Majma' al-Zawā'id*. Beirut: al-Qudsī.

IBN 'ABD AL-BARR (1979). *Al-Tamhīd*. Rabat: Ministry of Islamic Affairs.

IBN ABĪ AL-'IZZ AL-HANAFĪ (AH1400). *Sharh 'Aqīdah al-Tahawīyyah*. Beirut: Maktabah Islāmiyyah.

IBN AL-QAYYIM (1993). *Ijtimā' al-Juyūsh al-Islāmiyyah*. Edited by Bashīr Muḥammad 'Uyūn. Riyadh: Maktabah al-Mu'ayyid.

IBN AL-QAYYIM (1993). *Badā'i' al-Tafsīr*. Compiled by Yusrī al-Sayyid Muḥammad. Dammam: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī.

IBN AL-QAYYIM (1988). *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Mursalāh*. Edited by 'Alī Dakhilullāh. Riyadh: Dār al-'Āsimah.

IBN AL-ATHĪR, A. (AH1421). *Al-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Aḥādīth*. Dammam: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī.

IBN BATTA, A. (2002). *Al-Ibāna 'alā Uṣūl Sunnah wa Diyāna*. Madinah: Maktabah al-'Ulūm wa al-Hikam.

IBN AL-FĀRIS, A. (AH1429). *Mu'jam Maqāyis al-Lughā*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.

IBN HAJJAJ, M. (2005). *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah.

IBN HAJAR, A. (2000). *Fatḥ al-Bārī*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.

IBN HANBAL, A. (2008). *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah.

IBN KATHĪR, I. (1999). *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*. Riyadh: Dār al-Salām.

IBN KATHĪR, I. (2003). *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*. Riyadh: Dār 'Ālam al-Kutub.

IBN KHUZAYMAH, M. (1997). *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*. Riyadh: Maktabah al-Rushd.

IBN MANZŪR, M. (1997). *Lisān al-'Arab*. Beirut: Dār Ihya' al-Turāth.

IBN TAYMIYYAH, T. (AH1432). *Tafsir Ibn Taymiyyah*. Edited and compiled by Iyyād al-Qaysī. Dammam: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī.

IBN TAYMIYYAH, T. (N.D.). *Al-Istiqāmah*. Cairo: Maktabah Ibn Taymiyyah.

IBN TAYMIYYAH, T. (1996). *Sharḥ al- 'Aqīdah al-Wasītiyyah*. Riyadh: Dār al-Salām.

IBN TAYMIYYAH, T. (2001). *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*. Al-Mansourah: Dār al-Wafa.

KHĀN, SIDDĪQ HASAN (1965). *Fat-ḥ al-Bayān fī Maqāsid al-Qur'ān*. Cairo: Dār Umm al-Qurā.

AL-KIRMĀNI, HARB (2011). *Ijmā' al-Salaf fī al-I'tiqād*. Cairo: Dār al-Imām Aḥmad.

AL-LĀLIKĀ'I, H. (AH1418). *Sharḥ Uṣūl I'tiqād Ahli Sunnah Wal Jamā'ah*. Edited by Dr. Aḥmad Ḥamdān al-Ghamdī. Riyadh: Dār Taybah.

AL-MADKHALĪ, R. (2000). *Nadarāt fī Kitāb al-Taṣwīr al-Fannī fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. Ajmān: Maktabah al-Furqān.

AL-MADKHALĪ, R. (2012). *Qurat al- 'Aynayn bi Tawḍīḥ Ma'ānī 'Aqīdah al-Rāziyayn*. Algeria: Mirāth al-Anbiyā' publications.

AL-MAWSILĪ, M. (2004). *Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣawā'iq al-Mursala 'alā al-Jahmiyyah wal-Mu'āṭila*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.

AL-QUMMĪ, 'ALĪ B. IBRĀHĪM (1968). *Tafsīr Al-Qummi*. Maktabah al-Hudā.

AL-QURTUBĪ, M. (AH1413). *Al-Jāmi' Li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.

AL-QURTUBĪ, M. (AH1423). *Al-Jāmi' Li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. Beirut: Dār al-Kitab al-'Arabī.

QUTB, S. (AH1412). *Al-Zilāl*. Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq.

AL-RĀZĪ, F. (2005). *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah.

AL-SĀBŪNĪ, ABU ʿUTHMĀN (1994). *ʿAqīdah al-Salaf wa Ashāb al-Hadīth*. Edited by Badr al-Badr. Madinah: Maktabah al-Ghurabāʾ al-Athariyyah.

AL-SAʿDĪ, A. (2002). *Taysīr al-Karīm al-Rahmān fī Tafsīr Kallam al-Mannan*. Beirut: Muʿassasat al-Risālah.

SADIQ, S. (2007). *Takhīl al-ʿAynayn bi Jawāz Suʿāl ʿan Allāh bi ʿAyn*. Riyadh: Dār al-Tawhīd li al-Nashr.

AL-SAQQAʿ, ʿA. (1994). *Sifāt Allāh*. Thuqbah: Dammam: Dār al-Hijrah.

AL-SHANQĪTĪ, M. (AH1426B). *Adwāʾ al-Bayyān fī idāh al-Qurʾān bil-Qurʾān*. Makkah: Dār ʿĀlam al-Fawāʾid.

AL-SIJZĪ, ABU NASR (1994). *Risālat Al-Sijzi ilā Ahli Zabīd fī al-Radd ʿalā man Ankara al-Ḥarf wa al-Sawt*. Riyadh: Dār al-Raya.

AL-SUYŪTĪ, JALĀL AL-DĪN (2002). *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*. Edited by al-Mubarakfurī S.: et al. Riyadh: Dār al-Salām.

AL-TABARĀNĪ, S. (1983). *Muʿjam al-Kabīr*. Cairo: Maktabah Ibn Taymiyyah.

AL-TABARĪ, M. (2001). *Jāmiʾ al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*. Giza: Dār al-Hajar.

AL-TABARĪ, M. (AH1374). *Tafsīr al-Tabarī*. Edited by Aḥmad Shakir and Maḥmūd Shakir. Egypt: Dār al-Maʿārif.

AL-TIRMIDHĪ, ABU ʿISA (AH1417). *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*. Edited by al-Albānī M. Riyadh: Maktabah al-Maʿārif.

AL-'UTHAYMĪN, M. S. (AH1407). *'Aqīdah Ahli Sunnah wal Jamā'ah*. Madinah: Ministry of Islamic Affairs at the Islamic University of Madinah.

AL-'UTHAYMĪN, M. S. (1995). *Sharḥ Lam'at al-I'tiqād li-Ibn Qudamah*. Riyadh: Dār Adwā' al-Salaf.

AL-'UTHAYMĪN, M. S. (AH1419). *Sharḥ al-'Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah*. Dammam: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī.

AL-'UTHAYMĪN, M. S. (AH1421). *Al-Qawl al-Mufīd 'Ala Kitāb Tawḥīd*. Dammam: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī.

AL-'UTHAYMĪN, M. S. (AH1423B). *Tafsīr Sūrat al-Baqarah*. Dammam: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī.

AL-'UTHAYMĪN, M. S. (2004). *Tafsīr Sūrat Sād*. 'Unayzah: Shaykh Muḥammad b. Sālih al-'Uthaymīn printing press.

AL-'UTHAYMĪN, M. S. (2006B). *Al-Durra al-'Uthaymīniyyah bi Sharḥ Fath Rabbi al-Bariyyah bi Talkhīs al-Ḥamawiyyah*. Kuwait: Maktabah Imām al-Dhahabī.

'UTHMĀN, H. (2009). *Sharḥ I'tiqād A'immat al-Ḥadīth*. Riyadh: Maktabah Rushd.

ZAMANAYN, M. (2010). *Riyadh Al-Jannah bi Takhrīj Uṣūl al-Sunnah*. Edited by 'Abdullāh Al-Bukhārī. Riyadh: Dār Adwā' al-Salaf.

“Indeed the verses referring to the Attributes of Allah in the Qur’an were understood correctly by the Prophet’s Companions in their explanation. There was no differing amongst them...”

[Ibn Taymiyyah]

This book outlines the Qur’ānic meaning of Allāh’s Names and Attributes based upon the major canons of tafsīr. Mainstream tafsīr scholars who are from the Sunni background interpret the texts using principles clarified by Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) on how to understand the Qur’ān. They rely on the Prophetic narrations as well as narrations from the Prophet’s Companions and their Successors. With regards to the verses concerning the belief in Allāh, the mainstream Sunni tafsīr compilations clarify the apparent meaning of the Names and Attributes of Allāh.

This compilation of translated works of the scholars shows the importance of adhering to the books of Sunni mainstream tafsīr since they clarify the correct understanding from the Book of Allāh, the Prophetic Sunnah with the consensus of the companions.

